

tainers, the first a repaired edition of the previous year's cage, the second a 12" pot of grass enclosed in a butterfly net supported on a wire frame and lastly a cylindrical celluloid cage containing growing grass and with two large windows cut in its sides and covered with nylon netting for additional ventilation. No eggs were laid by any of the ♀♀ till they were at least a week old but in the end a large number were produced and again the vast majority were laid on the netting so that my bill at the end of this period was two breeding cages and a butterfly net destroyed and the netting on the cylinder requiring replacement. I began to see the point of A.C.'s remarks quoted earlier in this account. All the eggs coloured up, proving they were fertile but it was noticed later on, after they had been distributed amongst a number of pots of grass, that a high proportion had failed to hatch.

However, in spite of this I started the 1970/71 winter with some 70 larvae. They were kept under the same conditions as previously and the battle against mould was rejoined. By the end of May this year I had 33 pupae and two larvae still feeding up.

All these pupae hatched towards the end of June and all produced ♀ butterflies, about a quarter of which were *Excessa* forms in varying degrees. There were no ♀♀ and no sign of *ab. atrescens*. The two larvae that failed to pupate at the same time as the rest of the brood eventually died. In desperation I tried to get a mating with the last two ♂♂ to emerge, using wild ♂♂ but I was unsuccessful as no observed pairing took place although the conditions were exactly the same as for the previous summer..

Although the result of this breeding experiment was not what I had hoped for at least it has shown that, whatever else it may be, the aberation *atrescens* is not a recessive and that it produces a gene in the  $F_2$  generation that is 100% lethal to the ♂♂ probably in the egg stage. As a by-product it has shown that the aberation *excessa* is a recessive. It has been suggested to me that as *ab. atrescens* occurs in both sexes, and in fact is more frequent in the ♂ than the ♀, it may prove to be environmental. This may well be so but why then should it produce the lethal gene? I just don't know, and would welcome suggestions.

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SECOND BROOD *STERRHA TRIGEMINATA* HAW.—It is not difficult to obtain a second brood of this species in captivity, but I have not seen it in the wild until this morning, when I found two very fresh males in my m.v. trap. No doubt the fine warm weather which we have experienced during the past month has induced a few larvae to forego hibernation, and it will be interesting to see whether any other species of this family follow suit.—D. O'KEEFFE, 51 Parkhill Road, Bexley, Kent. 24.ix.1971.